



01a NCSL Presentation Slides

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Presentation Outline

- State approaches to home-based child care
 - family child care
 - family, friend and neighbor care
- State and local practices
- Challenges

Family Child Care in Context

- 1.4 million children in the U.S. cared for by family child care providers. (defined as caring for 2 or more unrelated children in the providers home)
- Wide ranges in the percent of care provided in homes by state and region.
- Concern about promoting safety and recent interest in healthy child development and early learning driving new interest in home settings.

- Higher quality early care and education programs produce better outcomes for children (cognitive functioning, language development, and social development)
- Research shows states with more effective regulatory structures have a greater supply of higher quality programs
- Child care quality research shows settings generally poor quality: only 10-15% of all settings promoted healthy development; for infants 35-40% of the settings were inadequate or potentially harmful to children's development

Iowa

Child care subsidy program data

- 56% of children in family child care:
36% in center care
- 79% licensed/regulating: 20% not
licensed/operating legally
- 82% of children in care of license
exempt are in care with non-relatives

Quality Factors

NAEYC recommends:

- Any program providing care for children from 2 or more families should be regulated
- Regulations should address group size and adult-to-child ratios
- Plus pre-service qualifications and in-service requirements
- Regulator caseload - should be no more than 75 centers and large family homes but prefer no more than 50

Definitions

- Family child care is defined differently in states
- Factors that separate licensed homes from license-exempt
 - Number of children in care
 - Number of families who rely on the caregiver
 - Amount of time spent with the caregiver

Threshold for Licensing Family Child Care

- 10 states license family child care when there is one child in care
- Almost half the states license when there are 3 or fewer children. NCCIC data show Iowa licenses at 6 children. Only 5 states set the threshold higher than 6 children.

Qualifications

- Provider education and training has been weak in states
- Ranges from no pre-service or training requirements to 6 hours, 15 hours, 24-30 hours. A few states require a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential for small or large family child care homes

Identified Challenges for Family Child Care Providers

- Lack of professional support & training
- Isolation
- Insufficient earnings and benefits

Approaches to Improving Quality

- Accreditation - National Association of Family Child Care (NAFCC)
- Mentor - mentor or consultant visits the home and provides training, information and support
- Family Child Care Networks - provide training, materials, links to resources
- Tiered reimbursement - higher reimbursement for higher quality
- Training/scholarships

Ideas in Practice

- Resource and Referral Agency Lead (Kansas): a resource and referral agency provides training, support groups, and substitute care with an accreditation focus. (Kansas)
- Group support: Good Beginnings Alliance (Hawaii)- operates 16 week sessions for playgroups for joint activities and materials.
- Family child care "hub" that provides oversight and resources for providers participating in the LA-UP pre-k (Los Angeles).

- Recruitment and Retention

(CA Child Care Initiative) five stage model to recruit, train and retain providers.

Training includes stipends and incentives to participate, training and technical assistance with start-up, home visits, and assistance with state licensing.

(other states replicating this include Arkansas, Florida, Massachusetts, Texas)

- Professional Development

Maryland Child Care Credential - the state includes 6 credential levels based on experience, training and professional development activities, provides a bonus ranging from \$200 - \$1000 and is tied to tiered reimbursement for the different credential levels.

License-Exempt Family Child Care

- Now being referred to as family, friend and neighbor care (used to be kith and kin)
- Home-based, license exempt caregivers with a familiar relationship to the family
- Overall data shows 40% of all non-parental child care hours for infants and toddlers are spent in this type of care as their primary arrangement
- 31% of children under 5 with employed parents are in these settings
- 20 states have publicly funded efforts to support this type of care and over 1/3 of states are including these providers in professional development activities

Measuring Quality

- Considerations are different - experts don't recommend looking at common indicators such as provider education and ratios.
- Rather suggest observation of caregiver interactions: Tools include:
 - Observational Record of the Caregiving Environment
 - Arnett Child-Caregiver Observational System
 - New tool: Child Care Assessment Tool for Relatives (CCAT-R)

Basic Health and Safety Approaches in Child Care Subsidy Programs For This Care

- Background checks- most states require background checks
 - State criminal record check (at least 32 states) even for relatives
 - History of abuse and neglect (at least 32 states)
 - FBI check (for criminal justice involvement in other states) (16 states)
 - Checks on other family members (22 states), usually members over 18

Self Certification (35 states)

- Caregiver completes and signs a statement which could cover health and safety practices, appropriate discipline, or other issues instead.

Orientation and training approaches

- Orientation to child care subsidy rules, tip sheets about care
- Workshops about providing care, CPR, SIDS
- Training – common is 3 hours but Arkansas has 10 hour training that includes child development

Home Inspection (6 states)

- One visit (3 states), AZ requires two annual visits; AR requires three annual visits
- States with high levels of requirements for license-exempt caregivers: Arizona (requires all), New Mexico, Rhode Island

Sample of State Efforts to Improve Quality

- 20 states with quality efforts
- Training and professional development (most common) with financial incentives to participate
- Materials and equipment – mailed or through home visits
- Technical assistance – through field offices or home visits

Challenges

- Lack of research: These efforts have not been evaluated. Not clear what strategies work.
- Have to balance: if too strict then disqualify too many caregivers or too lax and put children at risk
- Identify policy goals: Reduce accidents? Promote school readiness?

NCSL Technical Assistance

- Research
 - Identify experts
 - Provide testimony
- Assist with policy development

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